

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5597

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Environment, Water & Energy, February 24, 2009

Title: An act relating to investigating Washington's ocean renewable energy resources.

Brief Description: Investigating Washington's ocean renewable energy resources.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Shin and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Water & Energy: 2/17/09, 2/24/09 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Rockefeller, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair; Honeyford, Ranking Minority Member; Delvin, Holmquist, Morton, Ranker and Sheldon.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: The 2008 Legislature approved, and the Governor signed into law, legislation directing the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) and the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council to study development of wave and tidal energy in Washington. The work group was to report its findings to the Legislature by June 30, 2009. Funding for the study was suspended because of the state budget deficit. It is suggested that a more focused study be authorized and funded.

Summary of Bill: The CTED Energy Policy Office is directed to study several aspects of developing "ocean renewable energy," defined as wave, tidal, and offshore wind resources. Specifically, the agency must:

- determine potential size of the resource based on existing technology or technology likely to be available in five years, including analysis of limiting factors such as transmission capacity and protection of traditional uses;
- determine potential economic impact of development, including analysis under a range of scenarios;
- in conjunction with the Department of Ecology and other organizations, analyze potential environmental, navigation, and fisheries issues and conflicts, including those arising in permitting and site selection processes, and make recommendations; and

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- identify opportunities for and issues involved in demonstration projects and make recommendations for developing demonstration projects.

CTED must coordinate with appropriate entities and individuals, and may contract with persons not employed by the state. The agency must report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by September 1, 2010.

The act expires December 31, 2010.

Appropriation: \$225,000 or as much as necessary is appropriated to CTED for the 2009-11 biennium from the Energy Freedom Account for the purposes of the act.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There are great potential energy resources that could be analyzed in the study called for in this bill and it is critical for the state to be involved early in the process. Federal stimulus funding is a possibility. Siting of facilities raises issues and community involvement is important.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Burton Hamner, Grays Harbor Ocean Energy LLC; Rich Doenges, Department of Natural Resources.